NORTH – SOUTH KOREA

Red Cross Talks

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Agenda Items of Full-dress Talks Agreed Upon at the 20th Sitting of the Preliminary Talks between North and South Korean Red Cross Organizations

On June 16, 1972, the 20th sitting of the preliminary talks between the Red Cross Society of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the South Korean Red Cross Society reached the following agreement on the agenda items of the full-dress talks between the two Red Cross organizations.

1. **The question of finding out the addresses of the family members and relatives dispersed in the north and the south and ascertaining whether they are alive or dead and notifying the results;**
2. **The question of realizing free visits and free meetings between the family members and relatives dispersed in the north and the south;**
3. **The question of effecting free correspondence between the family members and relatives dispersed in the north and the south;**
4. **The question of reuniting the family members dispersed in the north and the south according to their free will;**
5. **Other matters to be settled in a humanitarian way**

How Did Preliminary Talks Open between North and South Korean Red Cross Organizations

The preliminary talks between the north and south Korean Red Cross organizations which opened at Panmunjom with the great expectation and interest of the entire people of north and south Korea and the peace-loving people of the world was held on 20 occasions. After an interval of 9 months since its opening, the talks brought to a conclusion the deliberations on the agenda-items which had been a focal point of discussion and came to have a bright prospect thanks to the sincere efforts and just stand of our side, though the south Korean side showed insincere attitude, came out with unwarranted arguments and resorted to delaying tactics.

The success of the talks is really a great joy for the entire Korean people who have been doing everything in their power to achieve the independent, peaceful reunification of the country, impatiently looking forward to the day of national reunification.

The preliminary talks between the north and south Korean Red Cross organizations was opened as a result of the consistent efforts made by the Workers' Party of Korea and the Government of the Republic to realize north-south contact and dialogue on the basis of the policy set forth by the respected and beloved Leader Comrade Kim Il Sung for the independent, peaceful reunification of the country.

Comrade Kim Il Sung, the respected and beloved Leader, taught as follows:

"As our policy for the peaceful reunification enjoys unanimous support not only of the Korean people but of the broad public opinion of the world and the tendency towards peaceful reunification grows in south Korea, even the south Korean authorities who had rejected any contact between the north and the south could not but come out to the north-south Red Cross talks, pressed by the trend of the times."

In accordance with the policy advanced by the respected and beloved Leader Comrade Kim Il Sung for the independent, peaceful reunification of the country, the Workers' Party of Korea and the Government of the Republic suggested long ago that Korea's reunification should be achieved by means of establishing a unified central government composed of the representatives of the people of all strata through free north-south general elections to be held in a democratic way without any interference of outside forces following the withdrawal of all foreign troops from south Korea.

The Workers' Party of Korea and the Government of the Republic have time and again put forward reasonable and realistic proposals for national reunifica-

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How Has North-South Korean Red Cross Preliminary Talks Proceeded

The preliminary talks between the north and south Korean Red Cross societies is in progress at Panmunjom since a way to dialogue between the north and the south has been pushed through the barrier for which the country has remained divided for more than a quarter of one century.

Comrade Kim Il Sung, the great Leader of the Workers' Party of Korea and the Korean people, said:

"Though it is rather late and the scope of problem being discussed is limited, the preliminary talks between the north and south Red Cross organizations now being held at Panmunjom are very significant at any rate since Koreans have got together to discuss internal affairs of the nation. It can be said that this is a step forward in the struggle of our people for reunifying the divided country peacefully."

The preliminary talks has it as its task, as proposed by our side, to discuss the venue, date and agenda of the full-dress talks, the composition of delegations to it and other procedural matters and clear the way for the convocation of the full-dress talks.

The talks had twenty sittings for nearly 9 months and its course was not plain sailing. But it brought about an agreement on such important issues as the venue and agenda of the full-dress talks, as a result of the sincere efforts of the DPRK Red Cross delegation.

The Talks Must Pave the Way to National Reunification

Comrade Kim Il Sung, the great Leader of the Korean people, pointed out:

"Our stand on the talks between the north and south Red Cross organizations is clear. We want to mitigate even a day earlier the sufferings our people are undergoing owing to the division, by bringing the talks to a success with all our sincerity and pave the way, with it as a stepping stone, to the peaceful reunification of the country."

The talks which is being held at Panmunjom aims at fulfilling the immediate, humanitarian task of alleviating the sufferings of the fellow countrymen living dispersed in the north and the south.

Compared with the task of greater fundamental significance, the reunification of the country—the unanimous desire of the entire Korean people who have greatly suffered from the territorial split till a new generation has grown up, that task is a small one and the scope of matters being discussed at the talks are limited.

Nevertheless, all the Koreans hope and believe that through the talks the north and south Korean Red Cross societies will carry out the

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A scene of the preliminary talks between the north and south Korean Red Cross organizations

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tion, suggesting north-south contacts for their materialization, and invariably maintained that political parties, social organizations and personages of various strata in north and south Korea should get together to sincerely and open-heartedly negotiate with each other.

Up to date since liberation, the Workers' Party of Korea and the Government of the Republic put forward proposals for the country's peaceful reunification on more than 130 occasions, including the eight-point peaceful reunification programme advanced again by the session of the Supreme People's Assembly in April 1971.

Besides, we repeatedly proposed to take humanitarian measures independently of political issues with a view to mitigating the sufferings of the fellow-countrymen living separated from each other in the north and the south.

On January 31, 1957 the Red Cross Society of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea sent a letter to the President of the South Korean Red Cross Society, proposing that the north and south Korean Red Cross organizations cooperate with each other so that the families and relatives torn apart in the north and the south can exchange letters of inquiry. We also proposed more than once that mutual visits and correspondence should be realized and journalists, art troupes and sports teams, etc. be interchanged between the north and the south.

This notwithstanding, each time the U.S. imperialists and the south Korean puppet clique opposed the fair and realistic programme and proposals of our Party and the Government of the Republic for the independent, peaceful reunification of the country and answered our sincere efforts with aggressive acts of provocation.

By no ruses, however, could the U.S. imperialists and the south Korean puppet clique bar the struggle of our people for the count-

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(Continued from Page 2) immediate, humanitarian task with credit and, at the same time, lay a solid, stepping stone for the national reunification.

When the preliminary talks opened on September 20 last year following the contacts made between the messengers of the north and south Korean Red Cross societies on five occasions, the entire Korean people were delighted at the news and wished the success of the talks.

When the Red Cross delegation of our side made clear at its first sitting that the talks should work out ways and means for mitigating, on the principle of freedom and in a broad scope, the sufferings of the families, relatives and friends scattered in the north and the south and serve as a stepping stone to the reunification of the country, the entire people of north and south Korea and the peace-loving people of the whole world warmly supported and welcomed our stand.

The talks has steadily progressed towards its goal thanks to the just stand and sincere efforts of our delegation.

As proposed by our side at the first sitting the telephone service was opened in the joint security area of Panmunjom on September 22 last for communication between both sides. It was of really deep significance, because it meant that the ties of blood between the north and the south was linked up again for the first time after severance of 25 years.

Full-dress Talks Is to Be Held in Pyongyang and Seoul

At its second and third sittings the preliminary talks discussed the venue of the full-dress talks. On October 6 last year it agreed on holding the full-dress talks in Pyongyang and Seoul. The agreement was announced to the public.

It was a splendid fruit of our consistent, sincere efforts. Our side had repeatedly proposed to designate Pyongyang and Seoul as places for contact and dialogue between the north and the south.

At the beginning of the talks our side proposed Panmunjom as the venue of the full-dress talks and, later, suggested that Panmunjom should be taken as the venue, to begin with, and it be moved to Pyongyang and Seoul when preparations are made.

When it proposed Panmunjom, our side took into consideration that the full-dress talks could be opened immediately without any special preparations when Panmunjom would be adopted as its venue, because both sides had there facilities of transport and communication convenient for the full-dress talks and that this could result in lessening the people's sufferings at such an earlier date.

Moreover, our side took into account the fact that the south Korean authorities had time and again turned down the proposals of our side to have contact and dialogue between the north and the south in Pyongyang and Seoul.

Now, at the preliminary talks the south Korean side expressed, though late, its consent, saying that it had no inconvenience in holding the full-dress talks in Pyongyang and Seoul alternately.

So, our side announced that the full-dress talks would be held in Pyongyang and Seoul, and thus the problem of venue was solved without any difficulty.

Why Didn't the South Korean Side Fix the Date of the Full-dress Talks?

Comrade Kim Il Sung, the great Leader, pointed out:

"From the first day they were compelled to come out to the talks, they dragged on the talks under this or that pretext and poured cold water upon the growing tendency towards the peaceful reunification, saying: 'Don't get too much excited,' and 'It is premature.'"

At the third sitting of the preliminary talks the two sides went over to discussion on the date of the full-dress talks, according to the set order of debate.

But the discussion, contrary to our expectation, brought about no agreement owing to the south Korean side's objection.

As for this problem, at the first sitting our side already clarified our stand of principle that the earlier the full-dress talks opens, the better it is. The discussion lasted from the third sitting to the sixth.

At the sixth sitting our side declared that we were fully ready to open the full-dress talks at any time, demanding the south Korean side to fix a date which it considered proper.

As the south Korean side failed to do so, our side proposed that the full-dress talks be opened at 10 a.m. on December 10, 1971, and demanded again the south Korean side to agree to our proposal or suggest a proper date. They did not respond to our reasonable proposal, putting forward an absurd proposal to fix the date at the closing session of the preliminary talks in disregard of the set order of discussion, under the prepostserous pretext that "No one can tell when the preliminary talks will end" and that "To fix the date now is contradictory to the inherent character of the preliminary talks."

Then, why did the south Korean side stubbornly oppose the fixing of the date of the full-dress talks, using this excuse or that?

Needless to say, they did so to drag on the preliminary talks indefinitely and make the prospects of the full-dress talks gloomy.

Considering that the since-

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For its correctness, the policy of the Workers' Party of Korea and the Government of the Republic for independent, peaceful reunification is not only enlisting the full support of the entire Korean people but also arousing unanimous sympathy from the people the world over.

The tendency towards national reunification is growing also among the south Korean people day by day and their struggle against the fascist rule and for the democratization of society is gaining momentum as never before.

Pressed by such a trend of the times, the south Korean authorities could not but accept, though belated, part of our consistent proposals full of compatriotic love and found it unavoidable to turn up at the north-south Red Cross talks.

Thus, the messengers of the north and south Korean Red Cross organizations had their first contact on August 20, 1971, and the preliminary talks started on September 20 following the contacts of the messengers made on five occasions.

Though it is rather late and the scope of problems it discusses is limited, the preliminary talks between the north and south Korean Red Cross organizations is very significant at any rate, for it is the talks in which Koreans have sat face to face to discuss internal affairs of the nation. It can be said that this is a step forward in the struggle of our people to reunify the divided country peacefully.

Upholding the policy for the independent, peaceful reunification of the country, set forth by the great Leader Comrade Kim Il Sung, we will make every possible effort to see the preliminary talks of the north and south Korean Red Cross organizations yield good results and create a solid stepping-stone to the independent, peaceful reunification of the country, the supreme task of our nation.

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rity of our side alone could not bring about an agreement on the problem of fixing the date of the full-dress talks, though it was essential, and that the talks should be no longer delayed simply because of the problem, our side proposed at the sixth sitting to put the assertions of both sides on record and let them known to all the people and go over to the next item.

Thus, the preliminary talks made no decision on the date of the full-dress talks and went over to the discussion on the problem of agenda.

Agenda of the Full-dress Talks Agreed on the Basis of Our Proposal

At the 20th sitting of the preliminary talks the agreed agenda of the full-dress talks was announced.

It took both sides nearly 8 months and 16 sittings of the preliminary talks and 13 sittings of the working-level meeting to reach an agreement on the agenda.

What delayed the agreement?

It was entirely the insincere attitude of the south Korean side and its delaying-tactics.

At the first sitting of the preliminary talks our delegation advanced a most fair and just proposal based on the principle of freedom, a proposal which elucidated the matters of basic method for the earliest, extensive mitigation of the sufferings of the families, relatives and friends dispersed in the north and the south and which fully conformed to the mission of the north-south Red Cross talks.

However, the south Korean side took an insincere attitude in the discussion resorting to delaying-tactics and at the sixth sitting, put forward its proposal which was quite different from ours.

The essential differences were manifested in the fact that our side suggested the families, relatives and friends dispersed in the north and the south as those whose sufferings are to be alleviated, whereas the south Korean side tried to limit the scope to families and that our side proposed to observe the principle of freedom in dealing with all the matters relating to mitigation of the sufferings of our fellow countrymen caused by the territorial partition, whereas the south Korean side insisted to carry out the work under restriction and control.

As for the category of those whose sufferings are to be alleviated, a focal point in the discussion on the agenda, our side strongly proposed to include the dispersed families, relatives and friends in the category, from the stand that the sufferings of as many people as possible should be mitigated, because all Koreans have been undergoing them due to the territorial split.

From the outset the south Korean side, however, doggedly persisted to confine the work to the "tracing of families." It tried by hook or by crook to justify their assertion and threw obstacles in the way of the discussion, twaddling about the "emergency relief," that is, "the family tracing is the first," "stages" of the work, the "experience in international tracing service" and "lack of ability," saying that the Red Cross had no experience and strength enough to tackle the work.

All these allegations were refuted by our side to the full. Then, at the 11th sitting the south Korean side put forward an "amendment" in which the problem of relatives was included as a secondary one. And at the 17th sitting, it agreed to put the problem of relatives on a par with the problem of families, as demanded by our side.

As for the problem of friends, our side agreed to include the problem in the agenda-item "other matters to be settled in a humanitarian way," considering that an agreement must be reached at the talks.

The south Korean side tried the hardest to oppose the principle of freedom, the free travel in particular, consistently advocated by our side. While talking about the "free world" and "freedom" at every opportunity, it turned dead set against our reasonable assertion that the agenda of the full-dress talks should be based on the principle of freedom. They went so far as to say that they could not accept our proposal on the free travel, because its aims "were not clear" and its "motives were doubtful" to them. And it brought forth the problem of "mutual visit" as a counter proposal. In this way, the talks came to a standstill.

Taking into account the assertion of the south Korean side, our side advanced at the 17th sitting another fair proposal to take the free visit instead of the free travel. This notwithstanding, it did not readily accept the proposal, and came out with another "amendment" in which it pled for the "free travel for mutual visit" and the exercise of "good offices," with the aim to restrict the scope of visit and put it under control. Thus it threw another obstacle in the way of the discussion.

The absurdity of the "amendment" was brought to light by our side. As things turned that way, at the 18th sitting the south Korean side consented to our proposal on the free visit and expressed its readiness to strike out the words "good offices" from its proposal.

The south Korean side, in the long run, agreed to the proposal of our side in principle. This brought both sides to reach in the main an agreement on the agenda-items of the full-dress talks. What should be done now was to elaborate on the agenda. At the 19th sitting our side proposed to hold the working-level meeting aimed at elaborating on the agenda of the full-dress talks, and opened a new phase for bringing the discussion on the agenda to an earlier conclusion. The working-level meeting had 13 sittings and fulfilled its task. Consequently, the agenda agreed upon by both sides was made public at the 20th sitting of the preliminary talks.

Now the forthcoming full-dress talks will discuss the mitigation of the sufferings of scattered families and relatives in a broad way, with the agenda set fairly on the principle of freedom. This success owes entirely to the just stand and sincere efforts of our side, as shown in the whole course of the discussion on the agenda.

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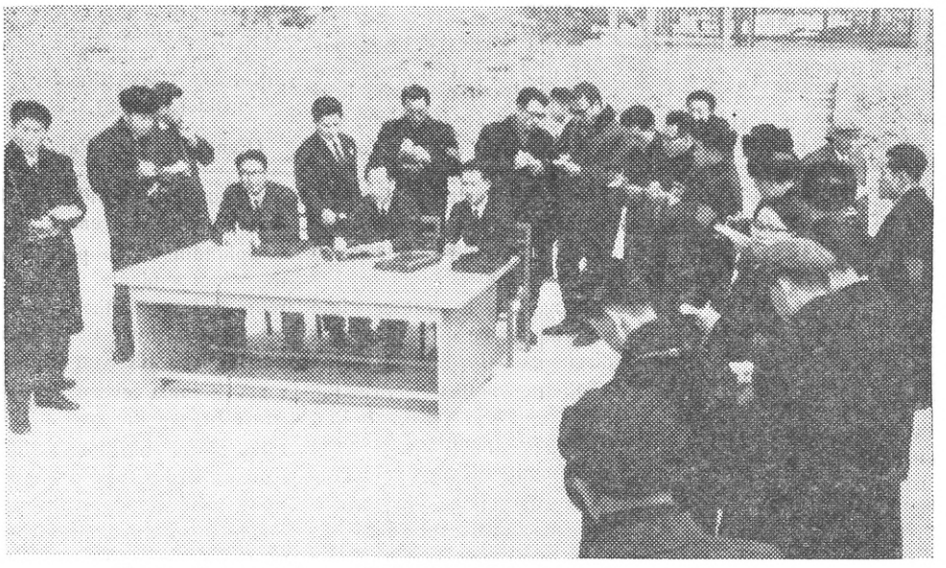
The Red Cross delegation of our side will as ever show all its sincerity in the discussion on the problems of composition of the delegations to the full-dress talks and its opening date and on other procedural matters.

The south Korean side must give up such insincere and unreasonable stand as taken in the previous meetings and must come to the talks with a sincere attitude.



The spokesman of our Red Cross delegation gives an interview to the home and foreign correspondents